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A C C O U N T
Of a NEW WAY of confidering
M U S I C K,
And T E A C H I N G it.

By Mr. BEMETZRIEDER,
Professor of Musick.

Being a Translation of his Work, entitled,
*Précis des Talens & du Savoir du Musicien,
avec une Méthode qui peut guider l'Amateur
dans son Etude.*
Which Work is intended to serve as an Explanation of,
and Companion to his
New Lessons for the Harpsichord.

L O N D O N :

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DATA SHEET

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I flatter myself that the lover of musick will favourably receive a view of the different parts of musick, disposed according to their natural order, together with a method which may facilitate and simplify the art. This is, hitherto, to be found nowhere, nor had I discovered it myself when I published the works which preceded the new *Lessons for the Harpsichord*, the proper companion to this, and intimately connected with it. What, however, I think I can now promise (and trust the candid professors of the art will allow me, when they have perused my work attentively, and tried it and compared it with others) is, with the discovery of a new point of view in which musick may be considered, to have found out a much plainer, shorter, clearer, and more satisfactory method of teaching it than any of those hitherto in use. A few hours spent in reading the present work, and comparing

paring it at the harpsichord with the new Lessons of Musick, will be the best tryal of the truth of my assertion; and to this I with chearfulness and confidence appeal, determined to stand or fall by it, being assured that I shall have justice done me in a country where, whilst every reward is given to successful industry, every attempt to throw out a new light is encouraged and looked upon with complacency.

The ART of Reading MUSICK.

THE art of reading music, consists in being able to pronounce the notes according to measure, either with the voice or on an instrument, giving them their true intonation towards the sharp or grave sounds and observing the equality of the movements indicated by the words *Allegro*, *Andante*, *Adagio*, &c. which indicate a greater or less, but always determined quickness which can neither be accelerated or retarded in the same piece.

There are two ways of doing this, either mechanically or by principles.

The ear alone directs the first, as by it we are enabled to pronounce musick, and even to read it with the eyes; but as the understanding which divides, distinguishes, compares, and sees what does not fall directly under the senses, has nothing to do in this operation; after fifteen or twenty years spent in this manner, the student can neither note an air he sings himself, nor those sung to

him by another: many think that being able to note down a little air from memory, is a part of composition and want to learn it, whereas a supplement of principles for reading musick would them suffice to be able to note every air as well from inspiration as from memory.

According to the other method, the understanding directs the eyes, fingers, and voice, and prepares and encreases the pleasure of the ears; those who read the musick, decompose the notes as they go along, and following the melody both through the principal and intermediate scales, enjoy a double pleasure, that of charmed sense, and that of satisfied reason. After two or three years spent in this pursuit, we know how to note the airs we remember, those which are sung to us, or played to us, and any extempore thoughts the genius of music may inspire.

This is what I teach on the harpsichord or piano-forte, a thing as easy to learn as it is agreeable to know. All my lessons begin with principles relative to the name and value of the notes, the order and value of the natural, sharp and flat notes, which belong to scales

Scales of different keys, the differences of our two modes, the analogies which bind or separate the keys, finally, the measure and movement; by this means my scholar learns easily and without perceiving it.

Every lesson begins with a few questions made at the harpsichord, and with my *new Lessons on the Harpsichord* before us; I ask these in such a manner as to force my pupil to compare and deduce consequences, to see several things at once, and to use the eyes of his understanding to find out what is hid from his senses.

When this is done, I apply my principles to the reading the airs and pieces, but in the beginning we play no cadences or graces of any kind, the first thing is to read correctly; we begin with one of the 24 scales of my *new Lessons fingered for the Harpsichord*; these are so many small airs, which being grounded on the immediate suite of the sounds of the scale and the sounds of the chief consonance of the key, or of the perfect accord of the *tonick*, shew the origin and progress of melody, and teach how to distinguish the two kinds of song, the harmonious and melodious.

I admit of no measured and nonsensical notes; chosen and well known airs must always be the lessons for a scholar.—no difficulties—no lengths—but a great deal of variety.... Men of genius ought sometimes to suspend their great works in order to do something in favour of beginners. For instance, a compleat collection of detached airs and pieces would be a great present to beginners; as in learning to read they would learn to know at the same time the nature, kind, species of, and difference between the multiplicity of airs and pieces in use in concerts and operas. Another thing equally useful, would be a selection (from the best writers) of pieces according to the order of difficulties, proceeding from the easiest to the most complicated. Such books would naturally produce good taste; I have began, and if I have subscribers to pay the expence, shall continue them.

My method of giving my scholar the principles of fingering consists in shewing him that it depends upon the two unequal lengths, *viz.* that of the keys of the harpsichord, and that of human fingers.—Short keys,

keys, long keys—the thumb and little finger short, and the three others long.—Three short keys running, and two short keys running—the three long fingers are for the first division, and the two first fingers for the second; by this means the thumb is always ready to begin again with the long keys, either in ascending or descending. The thumb and little finger for two keys distant from each other an octave, or a seventh, even though they are both short ones. The two fingers next to each other for two notes which join, or are only separated by one note. The two first fingers, i. e. the thumb and index, may play first and thirds, or first and fourths, &c. &c. With regard to the placing the hands, I observe to my pupil, that we must endeavour at the same time to please the eye, and play conveniently to ourselves, both which are effected, when the elbow is a little higher than the hand, and the fingers are bent circularly and not in a crook.

The third part of the lesson consists in teaching my pupil to sing, as he ought at least to be able to hum an air; in this pursuit

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we neither go after the brilliant or the difficult, all we sing is the intonation of the sounds of the perfect *accord* of the tonick, and the sounds of the scale. I arrange this lesson in an extent suitable to every voice, I vary and transpose it into all the musical keys, but I take great care to give to the *A* (to *A, mi, la*) as well as the other tonick notes always the same sound, in order to exercise my pupil's ear, that he may be able to tell at his entrance into a musick room what key they are playing in.

The first part of my new lessons for the harpsichord exhibits some examples of this method, which is very useful even to those who do not want to learn to sing, as it accelerates the progress of reading on the instrument, and improves the capacity for the other branches of musical education.

Finally, my last object in this first part is, to make my scholar able to note the airs he has got by heart, and to make him transpose our little Preludios from one key to another.

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E X E C U T I O N.

TO read and execute musick *well* is the talent of the virtuoso, who does not want merely to read musick, but wishes to excel in the part which has such powerful command over the passions of the hearers. The scholar who can read correctly may use the lessons intended for execution, which depends more on example than principle.

The method I would pursue is this. I would play over the piece the scholar wanted to be master of, making him attend to me, and observe my fingers and attitude: after this I would begin again, and make him observe the cadences, the graces (those in the book, and those I throw in) the difficulties easily played, the fine touch, and the difference between the same passage slovenly and well played. When I had done the scholar should set down and I would attend to his play, sparing him in nothing, but making him repeat the passages he missed, and using all the ideas that happened

pened to occur at the time to make his imitation easy. When I had gone on thus for two or three months with my young man, I should send him to another master, who should pass him on to a third, and so on, that he might acquire variety of manners, touches and expressions, which I take to be the best road a man can pursue, who wishes to be perfect.

ACCOM-

ACCOMPANYMENT.

~~SYNOPSIS~~

THE five wishes of the man who desires to learn accompaniment, are to be able to accompany a figured base ; a base not figured ; an air with the treble and base before him ; an air with the treble, base, and all the parts ; and finally an air with only the treble.

All these accompaniments, which are more difficult in appearance than in reality, I teach. As a little abstract of the science of harmonies and accords suffices for all, I disperse this in my lessons of accompaniment, and teach it my scholar in proportion as our examples require it ; I analyse the melody, and teach how to distinguish essential notes from those intended to fill up, from graces, and from passage notes ; I multiply and vary my examples, going from what is simple to what is complicated, and from the easy to the difficult.

Persons who are not able to play well may learn accompaniment, which perfects reading, and contributes very much to good execution.

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The SCIENCE and PRACTICE of HARMONY.

HERE begins the abstruse the difficult, but also the sublime part of musick. I teach this amiable and new science in the following manner.

Without amusing myself in discussions on the physical and geometrical principles of sound and the vibration of chords, which belong more to the mechanism of musical instruments than to musick considered as an art, I proceed directly to the fact, in order to shew my scholar the true theory of musick; and without dwelling on a vain erudition of ancient musick, and the uncertain origin of the sounds of the octave, I explain to him our musick as it actually stands, and shew him the use made of the 13 sounds of the octave in harmony and melody. I say nothing of the alterations introduced by the performer's sentiment and instinct into the sounds of the octave when they stand as seventh sharps or *sensibles*, as seconds, as fourths, or as sixths of the scale. Taking the sounds

of the octave for the 12 tonicks, I suppose them fixed and distant from each other a semitone, as they in fact are, and must be when they sound as tonicks and principals of the 24 scales of our musick.

I also pay no attention to the names of *accords*, considering the whole of the sounds together, relatively to the scale, and distinguishing the different collections of sounds by the words *consonant harmonies*, or *dissonant harmonies* of such a note of the scale, or simply by the words *consonancies* or *dissonancies* of such a note of the scale.

I then set down to the harpsichord, and with the plates of the second part of my new lessons on the harpsichord before me, I shew the consonancies and dissonancies of the scale, their positions with their bases, their extent and decomposition. I shew my scholar by examples, that the chain of keys, and the succession of harmonies, are the principle and extract of all musick; and that in the composition of men of genius, keys and harmonies are *constructed* according to the rules of syntax and rhetorick.

In order to explain the succession of harmonies in the same scale, I tell my scholars, that the harmonies, (that is, the consonances and dissonances) are the words of the musical language, which must be so ordered as to form phrases; that the *opposition* and *contrast* between the soliciting and reposing harmonies, form the sense of the harmonical phrase; that there are four reposes in each scale; that the consonance is not always intonation in the construction, but sometimes contrast and solicitation and sometimes repose; that often many consonances belong to the same scale, become reposes by turns, and sollicitors to each other, that even the dissonances are sometimes reposes and serve as interrogations, admirations and suspensions.

The two first plates of No. I. of my Harmonical Science, represent the four reposes of the scale, and their solicitations, together with the shades and gradations of the reposes.

These examples are written two ways, either constructively, or measured in the usual way.

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As constructive writing is a new thing in musick I have been obliged to have recourse to new signs for it, I pay no attention to measure and motion, double and single vertical bars separate the phrases, periods, numbers and keys; the *round or whole notes* represent the first and greatest repose of the scale which I consider as the repose of a point, the *half note* represents the second rest or rest of two points, the *half note with a point* the third or the rest of the comma and point; the 8^{th} of a note makes the fourth and weakest rest of the scale which figures in musical discourse as a comma rest, finally the 4^{th} of a note is intended for the notes of all the solicitations.

The positions or inversions of the harmonies are always ordered with their natural and extraordinary basses according to the ordinary rules of the direct and retrograde process, and the whole is concentrated in the extent natural to the harmonious discourses: in the construction the extremities of the instrument are avoided; the sharpest and flattest sounds are more an extension of the melody than of the harmony: there is most commonly a contrary direction of the base and

and treble: the unison of the base is most commonly omitted in the harmony.

When I make my scholar play I observe all these things to him for particular reasons*.

I often write the same example two different ways, i.e. constructively, and measured and embellished by the melody, I have twice made variations on the same harmonical foundation; finally there will be found variations, pieces upon one phrase, and even upon one consonance. This necessarily furnishes

* Should my scholar be desirous of imitating my harmonic examples and composing before his time, he will observe the great rule of 5th and 8th which, according to the principles of all the schools, must not follow each other if the notes go the same way, nor must one come at them but by the contrary way, moreover he will remain within the harmonic extent indicated by the numbers 1, 12, and 17 which are two octaves and a third; this is the distance fixed by nature and it is the greatest which can exist between sounds which must accord, for the 12th and 17th are harmonical sounds of vibrating chords and sonorous bodies. The nearer you bring the harmonic sounds to the fundamental the more you strengthen their union; the further you keep them apart, the more you weaken it.

furnishes the scholar with ideas, he sees how music has been made and its beginning and progression.

From the succession of harmonies in the same scale I pass on to the second chapter of lessons on the construction, and in order to make my scholar acquainted with the change and ordinance of the keys I explain the principle to him much in the following manner.

When you change the key, the intonation is not an indifferent matter, you may raise or fall the tone several degrees, the new sonorous body may have one or two sounds in common with the key you have quitted; it may even make quite a new harmony. In locking the keys together, let us take care to imitate nature, every thing she does is by gradations, thus the light of the day encreases and decreases; the darkness of the night thickens and then growes thinner; hope and fear separate pleasure from pain; every sentiment rises, matures, wains, and dyes. Let us then have a care to reprezent this simple and natural order of things, to lessen or increase the sharps or flats one at a time,

time, to run through the keys in this natural order, to rise by natural gradations to all the sharps, to retreat by the same degrees to the flats, now and then however let us break in upon the uniformity, and jump from the natural key to sharp 2, 3, or 4 or 5; or to 2, 3, 4 or five flats; for nature herself is sometimes extraordinary (at least she appears so) and lets us only see the extremes, producing wonders that astonish, and robbing our sight of the intermediate steps. Never, however let us consult her when she either fatigues or frightens, but let us banish from musick all whatever either hurts or fatigues the ear.

After this preparation, our next study is that of the circle of keys and their changes as well natural as extraordinary, the preparations of keys and transitions or surprises; the plates N° II and III make the study easy and the examples in N° IV shew the scholar the application of the principles; here the keys and harmonies are employed.

From number IV we proceed to N° V in order to study the different passages from one key to another, and to see how the harmonic chain makes the same base-note

go through all the degrees of the scale, and how one consonance extends to several keys.

Here I stop a little in order to accustom my scholar to the general and indeterminate combinations of keys, and to all the riches of harmony; for no man can chuse the phrases and progressions peculiar to particular pieces, but after he is master of all the phrases, and all the progressions.

In order to enliven our study we read the examples of N° VI. and learn how to make musick out of a single phrase or single consonance. We then apply this new art to all the riches of harmony, and learn how to modulate; and make voluntaries of our own*.

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* I also teach how to modulate and make voluntaries on all the keys of the harp; after many tryals I have perfected a particular method for this instrument which appears to me very fit for to exercise the power of harmony. The consonancies alone astonish and do wonders on the harp; but when a man can mix dissonances with them, and knows how to break his harpegio's by slow and precipitated strokes, or by the introduction of a few simple melodies, he is sure to master all hearts.

We now advance, and abandoning the general chain, compressing the circle of our keys and not wandering any longer in such immense space ; we put in order analogous and neighbouring intonations in order to come near the constructive chain of keys which enter into the composition of the several pieces most used in musick ; by confining attention you may captivate it and by this means persuade and seduce.

Again therefore do we open the book and stop at plate of N°VII and VIII in order to study analogous keys, and keys naturally subordinate to a principal one either major or minor ; after having examined a specimen of their construction, I divide the constructive chain of the keys of pieces of musick, into construction of *air* and construction of *recitative*, which recitative I divide into the *plain* and into *accompagnied*. On all these constructions I make the following observations,

1° In the construction of the *air* there is a principal key which begins and ends the piece ; this key takes the lead of all the intermediate keys which are so managed

aged as often to bring back the principale, to which all the others are subordinate.

2° There is not in general so exact an order kept up in the recitative, commonly it begins in one key and ends in another and the intermediate keys being arranged without subordination or reference to either the first or last key of the piece, succeed each other as in the general chain, sometimes naturally and sometimes in an extraordinary manner. In general the unity of a leading intonation cannot obtain when various, different, and often opposite passions agitate and tear the heart by turns. The soul torn to pieces by their alternate combats and victories soon becomes the slave of madness; the imagination is raised and presents a thousand different phantoms to the senses, cries of sorrow, terror and despair issuing from the bottom of the heart succeed each other without any order or connexion and are confounded with the unruly accents of joy and pleasure. Now that this violent and tumultuous language may be expressed, and that the like sensations may be raised in the souls of the hearers,

there must necessarily be motion and disorder in the intermediate intonations.

3° The keys which are analogous, neighbouring, or naturally subordinate to the principal are not the only intermediate ones, but all natural and extraordinary changes may furnish intermediate keys as well for the construction of the airs as for that of the recitative.

4° The intermediate scales extend and amplify the field of the principal one, their assistance is necessary towards unfolding and following the sentiment through all its gradations; for the slightest affection occasions a difference in the sensations, the most simple whole is a compound of most distinct parts, and the smallest part is susceptible of the greatest variety. Consequently intermediate keys subordinate to the principal, become a necessary element in musical construction, whether you would speak the language of passion, or imitate nature in the portraiture of what she exhibits.

5° But all the intermediate keys are not requisite in the construction of a single piece; the principal scale, intermixed with the

the scales of the fourth, fifth and sixth, afford a field fruitful enough. There are indeed many fine compositions of far less extent, and we have some charming airs founded upon only a single scale: in general ones or two extraordinary changes intermixed with a few natural and intermediate ones may suffice both for the expression, of the inflexions and gradations of the most tempestuous passions, and for the imitation of the most splendid phenomenon in nature.

6° The number and quality of the intermediate keys is not indifferent, nor is the principal key itself an arbitrary thing, but this art cannot fix; the only thing it can do being to make the scholar familiar with all the intermediates and all the principals. The compositor studies his subject, and when he is filled with it, he consults his feelings and sets down to write. If he happens to be alike inspired by genius and directed by good taste, he gives the true intonation, and only uses those intermediates which are absolutely necessary for the expression or picture of the subject.

7° The only advice which the master can give the scholar with regard to the choice and order of his keys, is that of endeavouring in all cases to give pleasure to the ear, for when once the organ is charmed the road to the heart is open, then the least movement is able to awake the passions, and when these are awakened under proper guidance we are masters of all the feelings.

Having acquired these previous ideas, we now proceed to the analysis, and decompose the melody, the sonata, the concerto, and the score. I observe to my scholar that the melody is divided into phrases; that the notes of the melody and of the measured accompaniment are not all of equal importance, but that the one serve as shades or connections of the others, that the harmonical construction is the accompaniment of the song, pieces and score, that the accompanying harmony takes in the essential notes, that there are seldom more harmonies than times, that the same harmony often lasts for a whole measure and even sometimes gets into the measure that follows, that the rests of

of the melody fall upon the notes of the *resting harmonies*. We then compare the pieces and score, and I make him observe the two sorts of melody, one versified, rhymed and in symmetry, the other prosaic, rapid and irregular, the one the song for the soul the other that for the ear. We also take notice of the infinite difference between passages stuffed with notes, the produce only of knowledge in the art, and dialogued and natural melody directed by genius.

With the melody, the pieces, and the score always before us, we now proceed to study the *character*, *form*, and *style* of the different pieces of musick. We have recourse to the same fountain to acquire notions of the effect of the voice and instruments, but if the scholar happens to question me about the extent of these, I refer him back to the first plates of the first part of my new lessons on the harpsichord, where we meet with the limits which have been fixed by nature, and are never to be passed. If he objects to this progress of art, I answer that perfection itself has limits beyond which all again becomes imperfect. If he speaks of a few good voices and a few good instruments which go beyond

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all the limits, I allow that nature sometimes works prodigies, and that we have some privileged beings who have removed the boundaries both of voices and instruments, but I contend that such exertions are never made but with an adequate loss of strength and beauty. As to the publick it pays upon the whole very dearly for the pleasure it receives from such extraordinary exertions, since for one Apollo or Syren there are many mad Ajaxes; for a good sound more either flat or sharp in a privileged instrument, we are forced to put up with many a rude and disagreeable one, many a one nearer a kettle than a kettle drum. If my scholar still persists and blames the compositor, (as the audience do when a fine singer or great instrument player happens to be hissed,) I then allow that he is obliged to write on an illimited scale, since wind instruments are no longer allowed to confine themselves to the bare imitation of the human voice, but must execute variations, sonatas and concerto's, and since every violincello must become a violin, and every violin a flute or flageolet.

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By discoursing together in this manner and comparing the songs, pieces and scores, we purify the taste, and learn to distinguish the good from the bad. Specimens of what we do on this head are to be seen in N° IX.

By means of the analysis we make the musical beauties our own and fill our heads with the fine harmonick thoughts to be met with there. N° X. offers some of these which are not indifferent. *Four* to wit the rule of the octave, the progression of consonances and dissonances, and the final phrases, are generally approved and are become principles; *two* shew that a great deal is to be done upon the same base, and *that* which is measured will not I flatter myself be without approvers notwithstanding the variety of taste.

And now we are at length arrived at the sublime; Harmony sprang from chaos, has received form, motion and organs so that all, remains is to animate it. . . . Let us turn over leaf and we shall see this great work of musical creation in N° XI, Harmony receives the divine breath of melody.

Then the disciple stands no longer in need of my assistance for by reading the examples

he is enabled to discover of himself the greatest number of the secrets of musick.

As a finish to our lessons on the science of harmony I proceed to the 12th and last number of this part, and shew my scholar the rules which I have followed in ordering the base with the positions of the harmonies, rules which I have also observed between the base and the melody. By these rules I make a lesson for him who chuses to compose constructions and embellishments, and I say.

1º Rules do not teach the art of composition, but only the art of writing correctly a thing of as great use in musick as in literature; for if no man is reckoned a man of letters without his being able to write well, although he should think, write and dictate so as to amuse all mankind, so no one will be reckoned a first rate musician, without correct writing, though all his works should be dictated by genius and inspired by taste.

2º We must not however neglect invention to obtain a secondary talent, for the creative art of imagining happily is the talent of the Gods, immutable and

and eternal like their immortal selves; whereas the art of good writing is the talent of men, and variable as the mode or caprice which guides them in all they do; it is a kind of dress invented by the self-love of knowledge, in order to adorn memory, and put out, (if that were possible) the too great resplendency of genius.

3° If my first reflexion raises the art of writing correctly too high the second may possibly bring it down again too low, and the two extremes may be equally fatal to the scholar; in order therefore to keep him in the just mean, and to encourage him to learn and observe the rules of correct writing, I continue my reflexions and remind him that compositors are more alive to criticism than to praise; and that there are purists in musick as well as in language who like these do not always open a book to extend the sphere of their (narrow) ideas or to amuse themselves but to find a fifth or octave where it should not be; finally that criticism when it says with a fastidious air, this is ill written, it is full of faults, does an author ten times more harm than the warmest approbation

though extended to every possible panegyric on his invention, his order, his fire and his taste, can possibly do him good.

4° Seeing my apprentice-composer now disposed to listen to me, I enter deep into the business, and thus begin. In the succession of harmonies sounds have three movements.

A direct movement (*motus rectus*)

All sounds go either towards the sharp or flat, they either ascend or descend.

A contrary movement (*motus contrarius*)

Flat sounds ascend, whilst sharp ones descend, or flat sounds descend whilst sharp ones are ascending.

An oblique movement (*motus obliquus*)

Flat sounds rest whilst sharp sounds move, or sharp sounds rest whilst flat ones move.

5° In the succession of harmonies of the same scale the first or principal notes either ascend or descend a second, third, or fourth for we come to the same note by rising a fifth or by falling a fourth, by rising a sixth or falling a third, by rising a seventh or falling a second; the same thing happens when

when you fall a fifth, sixth or seventh, or rise a fourth, third or second.

6° In the succession of harmonies if the first notes go by seconds, three notes are changed, if they go by thirds you change only one, and if by fourths two.

7° In the succession of harmonies, the notes are placed in the first position, according to the natural and fundamental order of the numbers 1, 3, 5, and 1, 3, 5, 7, or according to the other positions and inversions mentioned in N° I.

8° If the consonancies or dissonancies follow each other in seconds, the notes of the harmony must never appear twice together in the same position.

9° If the harmonies proceed by thirds and fourths, the first positions can only appear twice together on rested bases, or on such bases as proceed in contrary senses.

10° In a succession of harmonies, if the fundamental or first notes are in the base, the contrary motion must always obtain between the base and the harmony.

We next try the effect of these observations and lessons with the instrument. I make

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my scholar observe that all these precautions are necessary on account of the fifths and octaves, and that one is often obliged to omit the unison of the base, in order not to have bad octaves, another time one must repeat the base an octave higher or lower, another time repeat the harmony from a more elevated or lower position: If my scholar has forgot what I told him about 5ths and 8ths in the note of p. 14, I then repeat it.

THE RULE OF FIFTHS AND OCTAVES.

In order to go as one should do from a fifth to another fifth, from an octave to another octave, or from any sounds at what ever distance from each other to a fifth or an octave, you must give the sounds the oblique or contrary motion.

I likewise repeat the rule relative to the extent, and observe that in order to write the harmonical construction correctly, the base must never be too far from the harmony; both may be together in the same octave, but their greatest distance must not be more than two octaves and a third.

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If the scholar has observed what I said to him and attended a little to my own examples, he will not fail to observe to me, that I have not myself exactly followed the rules I prescribe to others; I shall then tell him that the unisons of the bases now and then repeated in the harmony are not to be reckoned amongst the octaves of the rule, and that sounds of the harmony doubled towards the sharp, and the sound of the base doubled towards the flat do not hinder the whole from being within the required limits. If he insists upon a few fifths which in the solicitations of the rest of the lead note take the bad road, I shall tell him one need not always be so very sharp sighted, and that a very fine effect makes amends for a very small irregularity.

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The SCIENCE and PRACTICE of ACCORDS.

THOUGH this part of musical education is not new, having already been separately treated of in the works intitled *School of general base, Treatise of Accords, &c.* yet I hope that the reader inclined to follow and go over with me the plates of the third part of my *New Lessons for the Harpsichord* will meet with something new both as to the matter and form, even supposing him to be already very well versed in *accords*.

I might repeat here what I have said before with respect to musical reading, viz. that there are also two roads to come at the reading and practice of accords, so that we may arrive at this delightful possession either by an obscure road, covered with thorns and bryars, and encompassed by the deepest night; or by an agreeable path, easy, coverd with flowers and always illuminated by the fair face of day; I could likewise point out the two ways: but I believe I shall sufficiently perform what is exspected of me, if

I explain my own method of teaching. The lover of musick who wishes to try it and in consequence, to take lessons of accord of me, will soon find out by his own experience that this is neither so long nor so intricate a thing, as for a long time past, by standing obstinately to the old method it has been made.

At the harpsichord as before, and as before, with the plate N° 1. of my science of accords before us, we study the nature and numbers of simple accords, and their orthographical signs, in order to be able to distinguish the bad cyphers as well as the good. We examine the division of simple accords into consonant accords and dissonant accords, into false or diminished accords, into superfluous accords, into major or minor accords, and into accords common to the two modes.

During this study, which employs no faculty but the memory, I reason with the scholar and make him discover the scale of every simple accord. When I remind him of the division of the scale into consonant sounds and rests, and into dissonant sounds,

solliciting or appellant, he can of himself find out the notes which must follow every accord in order to resolve it if it be dissonant; he is also able to resolve the consonant accords when they are considered as *contrast* and *sollicitation*. I indicate the intonations of the keys which comprehend the notes of the consonant accords, and the dissonant harmonies which comprehend the notes of the dissonant accords.

In order not to fatigue the brain too much, we learn this by degrees, and often go over the plate which contains all these principles, and serves as an introduction to those which come after; I contrive my questions in such a manner as to shorten, facilitate and throw light upon the study of my scholar, who in a short time is enabled to answer all the questions; and give the most knowing solutions of them by word of mouth and upon the instrument as well as a professor.

In the plates of N° II. we study the nature, signs, number, division and employment of the compound consonant accords.

The

The examples not measured are constructively written according to the notions of the harmonick science which have been explained in the preceeding part, and the bases of construction are sometimes embellished; by this means my scholar improves and perfects one talent whilst he is acquiring another. The rules on the ordinance of the position of the accords with the base are indicated by precept and example. Every thing is carried on by gradations; the consonant accords are first of all produced *by some*, and then by all the consonancies of the scale; the consonant *accords* are first of all connected with the neighbouring keys, then with all the analogous keys, finally the consonant accords alone make pieces full of all the variety of keys which can enter into the construction of *airs* or *recitative*.

As soon as my scholar becomes a little familiar with the connection of the compound consonant accords we proceed to N° III. in order to get acquainted with the compound dissonant accords. The inspection, examin-

ation and very little study of the two tables in which he will find not only the most usual accords in musick but all those that are possible, easily make him acquainted with the name, sign, number and division of the compound dissonant accords.

N° IV. indicates the accords of the rule of the octave; first a single accord accompanies each note of the scale; this is every time the most proper accord for the degree of the scale, and the most common in our musick; after this all the accords commonly used are divided betwixt the eight degrees of the scale. I stop a little at this lesson to make my scholar transpose the two examples, which I make him note and cypher in every octave; I expect he should execute his cyp-hered notes every time upon the instrument, upon which I likewise make him transpose the two examples from memory.

By practising the examples N° V. we learn the employment of the dissonant *accords* which are mixt in the construction with the consonant ones.

Finally

Finally the sixth and last number of this part offers some objects of curiosity. 1° The consonant *accords* are mixed with the accords of the second table, and connected with the same base. 2ly The consonant accords are mixed with the accords of the first table, and likewise connected with the same base.

C O M-

COMPOSITION.

TO know how to conceive a melody and distribute it amongst voices and instruments, to know how to make and adapt to this melody one, two and three accompanying parts, and finally to know how to put the melody and these accompaniments into score are the three great branches of composition.

In the present age the talents which belong to the art are too much separated from those which belong to genius, and people learn too easily the great art of writing in score; we are overrun with musick, and harmony and melody are both of them drowned in a heap of notes. . . . Oh! that it were covered, this precious art, with a thick and obscure veil which none but the sons of genius could lift up or see through! The children of genius are the only ones worthy of knowing this wonderful language which exercises its power over universal nature; They ought to

to be instructed in the midst of a holy sanctuary, there the disciple might be taught that the musical language is sacred, and not to be spoke by the profane. The children of the Greeks, consecrated to Apollo, were initiated in the mysteries of Orpheus in the temple of Delphos. There, were never heard the paltry little words *canon, fugue, filling up, interrupted cadence, subject, putting notes together to make a sextuor, &c.* but it was the province of musick to give expression to the painting of moral sentiment, and to paint the beauties of nature. Such was the language the priest used to speak to his disciples; consult sentiment when you are to utter the quick and broken accents of passion, sing the amiable affections, use the strongest sounds when you wish to imitate the phœnomena of nature, and consider the Graces when you want to paint elegant motion; above all, recollect in the accompaniments of your melody, that every tempest has sounds congenial to it, and that the movements of passion are more varied and more animated than those of a slight affection, &c.

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The

The disciple having arrived thus far by the study of the sciences of harmony and accords, is prepared for the great work of composition. He may even think himself already a little master, when he knows how to imitate the examples which are in the second and third parts of my new Lessons for the Harpsichord, and can compose harmonical constructions and cyphered bases, if besides he can animate these constructions and bases by melody; and has the gifts of genius, he is worthy to enter into the sanctuary of Apollo, and may in time become a great compositor, if he is under the guidance of a good master.

I now suspend my lessons of composition till I have myself reached the top of the profession by composing Sonatas, Concertos, and Operas; but then I shall give my scholar the precept and example, and he will have confidence in me; for having been once applauded, my instructions will have become oracles, and what I say will be the criterion of the sublime. At present happening perhaps sometimes not to be of the opinion of the day, but blaming what is in vogue, and recommending

commending melodies and accompaniments no longer in fashion: I might happen to lose my scholar, on his hearing that he had a master who taught him nonsense; or if, notwithstanding this, he had the courage to persist in taking lessons of a man who had produced nothing on the great Theatres of Italy, England, France and Germany, he would not dare to own it, and I should lose the credit of my work.... To prevent this mortification, I send my scholars docile and well principled to the great masters, who are the oracles of the great towns, and all I ask in return, is a few compliments, if they happen to find they have not quite lost their time in studying the three parts of my new Lessons on the Harpsichord.

The reader who likes to set limits to musical education will be pleased with this chapter, in which he will think he fees the boundaries that part the musician and the amateur; another, on the contrary, who does not entertain a very high opinion of musick, will ask what the wonderful master can teach his scholar more. My answer to

G this

this last is, that the master may make a great number of useful observations on the composition of the melody, on the division into, and difference between, vocal and instrumental airs, on the airs that suit different countries and different sorts of poetry; for air is as different as language, and the difference is very sensible between that of one country and that of another.

There are likewise several reflections to be made on counterpoint *, or composition in many parts, but I leave this to contrapuntists and professed masters of compositions. It is their business to give the publick an account of the talent which sets them so high. When I am elevated as high as they, I will endeavour, if possible, to say still more.

* *Punctum & puncta contra punctum*, and now note and notes against note.

MUSICAL ERUDITION.

WE are now come to the last chapter of musical education. The scholar being now initiated in the science and practice of the art, we may begin to pour in the ornaments, and bring him acquainted with the origin of the sounds of the octave, the birth of our two modes, the principle of harmonies and accords, the antiquity of musick, its progress and various systems, its history, its professors, the several performers and the several instruments.

Here I take up my scholar again, (provided he returns to me,) and we discourse together upon all these subjects, but we no longer observe any regular order, but follow the objects as they happen to offer themselves to the mind; sometimes we speak of the ancients, and sometimes of the moderns, sometimes of instruments, and sometimes of musick; now we offer tribute to the memory of those who have enriched the musical world with so many works of genius, and

so many good treatises to render the acquiring the art easy; at another time we admire the patience of authors who have compiled and copied volumes in 4° and folio, to give us musical curiosities of all ages.

If my scholar happens to have talked with any of the envious tribe, who delight more in offering incense to the dead than in doing justice to the living, he will ask me many questions about the *Greeks*. I shall tell him what my memory happens to offer about their scale, the differences of their modes and genera, the system of Pythagoras, and the mysterious numbers.—If he insists farther, and wishes to know my true opinion, I shall tell him, that I do not conceive it possible to form to ourselves any idea of what the beauties of the Greek musick consisted in; their great works in musick have not come down to us like their great works in eloquence and poetry; we know nothing certain of their method of notation; perhaps we should not think quite so highly of them if we had their works and could compare them with the encomiums of their poets; perhaps we should be as much surprised

prised at the exaggerated praise as posterity will assuredly be, if together with our enthusiasm, the rare productions that have given rise to it are handed down.

I am also of opinion that Pythagoras's system and theory did just as much for ancient musick, as our systems and theories do for modern; we have excellent compositions, the authors of which are entirely ignorant of all systems ancient and modern; I believe it was just so formerly, for the productions of genius have at all times been prior to the observations of art.

I may say just as much about the mysterious numbers...

I, 2, 3, 4, &.... 10;
for the *tetrachord*, or scale of four notes, is prior to the observations of Pythagoras. Eve, according to a German author, sang the *Jusa** of the natural tetrachord

(*)

Suse liebes Kindlein, suse

C D E F (*ut ré mi fa*)

to set Cain asleep; and men continued for the space of 3434 years to make songs and musick with the notes of three simple tetrachords.

C D E F (*ut ré mi fa*);

D E F G (*ré mi fa sol*);

E F G A (*mi fa sol la*);

and of three double ones.

C D E F, E F G A;

ut ré mi fa, mi fa sol la;

B C D E, E F G A;

si ut ré mi, mi fa sol la;

E F G A, B C D E.

mi fa sol la, si ut ré mi.

At length Pythagoras came. At first he sang like other people, but the notes of the single and double tetrachords not being sufficient for his great genius, at first he made a new scale, and put four tetrachords, one by the side of the other, in the following manner.

B C D E, F G A B flat,

si ut ré mi, fa sol la si bémol,

B C D E, E F G A.

si ut ré mi, mi fa sol la.

To

To the flat of these four tetrachords he repeated the unison A of the last sharp note, in order to make the principal or tonick note of his scale.

Thinking on what he had done afterwards in his walks, and looking for a mechanical method of guiding the ear in the intonation of so many tetrachords, and for the tuning of instruments, he chanced to go by a blacksmith's shop, where four hammers beating on an anvil suggested an idea to the first genius of his age ; Pythagoras distinguished a fundamental sound, a fifth, a fourth, and an octave ; he examined the hammers and the anvil, and saw an inequality of weights in the hammers ; he tied the same weights to four ropes of equal length and thickness hung to the cieling ; he pinched the ropes thus stretched and again heard a flat, its fifth, fourth, and octave ; these observations he submitted to examination, and formed his system of the division of chords. *Unity* became the principle of all things, and *ten* of all nature ; Pythagoras gave to four, that is, to the quaternary numbers, all the power of ten ; for, says he . . .

I, 2, 3 & 4, make **IO**.

I, gives the key note, the fundamental sound; $\frac{1}{2}$, its octave; $\frac{2}{3}$, its fifth; $\frac{3}{4}$, its fourth: 4 indicates the number of the degrees of the *tetrachord*; 3 the number of intervals to be gone over, in order to go thro' the degrees of the tetrachord both in ascending and descending; 2, the number of the intervals of a tone; and 1, the number of the intervals of a semitone of the tetrachord: 4 indicates the number of tetrachords comprised in the extent of the voices and instruments, &c.

2286 years after Pythagoras the sacred college of mysterious numbers was increased; listening to the bells of Clermont, Rameau consecrated to harmony the numbers . . .

5, 12 & 17; but this was not till several years after musick in part had been in use.

The sound of a bell is not one simple sound; besides the flat, we hear distinctly a sharp at the 12th, and another at the 17th; the 12th brought near an octave towards the fundamental makes its fifth; and the seventeenth

teenth brought nearer to the fundamental of two octaves, makes its third; the number $\frac{4}{3}$ gives that third.

The sound of the vibrating chord has also the same *replies* or harmonicks, but the effect of them is less sensible than in sonorous bodies; it may however be distinguished on a harpsichord, and even on a good piano; when you have put your ear close to the treble, and played the second C of the base short, then if you take your hands off the key a little quick, the vibrations of the chord are stifled, and the *tremblings* of the harmonicks become sensible, so as even to be strong enough to move little pieces of paper put on the chords. The tremblings of the harmonicks are likewise very plain if you play a counter-base found in a musick shop.

At this time of day we ought to consecrate a great many more numbers, since, according to our theory and practice, the minor third, the major sixth and minor sixth, are likewise consonant accords.*

* In the plates which ends my new *Lessons for the Harpsichord*, I shew my seholar all the sacred and profane numbers of musick; the sounds of our octave are represented by numbers and lines.

With respect to the diversity of the modes of musick, I inform my scholar, that it might be with the ancients as with us: the placing of the two semitones of our scale, constitutes the difference betwixt our two modes: in a major key they are placed betwixt a third and fourth, and between a seventh and eighth; and in a minor they separate the second from the third, and the sixth from the fifth: the placing of the semitone between the degrees of the tetrachord in the flat, sharp and middle, may likewise have made a great difference. Besides, they had possibly a fixed Diapason (an *A mi la*) both for voices and instruments; in which case a tetrachord, a key more or less sharp, or more or less flat, may have been consecrated to a determined expression. We say, that a minor key is melancholy, that a major is lively, that the major of *Eb* is majestic, the major of *E* brilliant, the minor of *F* moving and pathetick, that people are put to sleep in *C*, and buried in *A* or *E* minor, &c. We say this, though we confound the effects by continued changes of our diapason. What might not a poet say of our 24 keys, if we had

had sense enough not to run so much after forced and extraordinary sounds; it is in a small circumscribed circle, proportionable to our organs, that we ought to look for the beauty and power of sounds both for the voice and instruments. The diapason *Amila* being once fixed within the extent of true sounds, the particular expression of each key would soon be felt, and then one might expect to meet with the wonders of the Greek modes in our musick.

In speaking of musicians, we pay no attention to their private history, and only concern ourselves with their musical talents; we trace the genius they had for observation, and that they had for composition; I observe to my scholar, that one embellishes the art, and the other ennobles it; that one is full of fire and wildness, the other of spirit and method; that the one shines, and the other gives light.

Here I am a little embarrassed, I can say nothing by memory of the progress of musical genius; in order to be able to say how it proceeds in its researches and productions, I ought to have the model in myself; for

large musick books give us the anecdotes of the private life of the musician, the dates of the publication of his productions, together with a little incense, or a great deal of criticism, but nothing about the progress of his merit ; and yet, as in my opinion this is the finest chapter of erudition, I get through it as well as I can, and give the spirit of the writer by small extracts from the work. As the conversation may sometimes chance to run on the living as well as the dead, it may happen that my scholar may take me for somebody, and ask me some questions about myself : in that case I do not put on an assumed modesty, but speak of my musick, and tell him what I know, and how I came to know it, pretty nearly in the following manner . . .

I learnt musick as many others do, without any principle or theory, and, as many others do, became a *wonderful* little man without knowing how, or why. One day, however, happening to be tired with my mechanical knowledge, I looked into a musick book to try and get a little more light, but looked in vain. True, I found explanations

nations of the organ maker's talents, and the way how to talk about sonorous bodies, and ancient musick, and modern musick, and the stupendous preference to be given to the former, but nothing to satisfy me about the art itself. What was to be done? I first blamed my own stupidity, and then conversed with the great masters. This conversation made me make it up with myself, but it made me quarrel with all the musick books, for I saw it was possible to be a perfect musician and know nothing at all of what had been written upon musick.

Not able however to resolve on groping for ever in the dark, I thought more and more on the talents of a real musician, and began to analyse them. This taught me that he was acquainted with *keys*, *accords*, *harmony* and *melody*. I then decomposed the scores of our composers, and took away the *measure*, in order to get at the substance: thus I fixed a chain of keys, and a series of accords; I brought my accords together in order to consider them in two ways, i. e. with reference to the scale of the key, and relatively to the base; in considering them with

with reference to the scale, I gave them the names of *consonant harmonies* and *dissonant harmonies*; in considering them with regard to the base, I left then the name of accords. The consideration of the combinations of several sounds in one, or the effect of many sounds together, in reference to the scale, appearing essential to me, I lost sight of the name of accords, to employ myself in settling all the *harmonies* that could come into a single scale. Having done this, I compared the chain of keys and the series of harmonies to speech, and it seemed to me, that in the scores of men of genius, *keys* and *harmonies* were ordered and constructed according to the rules of syntax and rhetoric.

In examining and comparing these materials, I discovered some first elements, and some principles, which preserved me from the errors of those who confound musick with instruments, and would explain the effects of the art by geometrical reasonings. I saw indeed, that the relations which subsist between *keys*, *harmonies*, and *accords*, are the base on which the science of musick rests, as the relations betwixt *lines*, *surfaces*, and

and *bodies*, are the elements of geometry; but the latter are measured by rules and compass, whereas it is the ear alone which enables us to judge of the former.

This discovery led me to the theory which appears in my works. At first I limited myself to the useful, and took the sounds of the octave, such as they are at present, and as they are known to every body, and I shewed the use which was made, and which ought to be made of them in our musick, in order to form harmony and melody. Having done this, I went higher, to see whence the sounds of the scale actually come from: for this purpose I turned my eyes North and West, and East and South, saying, does this rich present come out of Egypt or of China? or does it spring from the *mysterious numbers of Greece*? . . .

The authors who have written on the subject before me, all looked into antiquity to ennable their ideas; seduced by their example, I determined to go higher still, in order to give my work a more illustrious beginning; I took man when he came out of the hands of Nature; in order to prove that

that the sounds of the octave must be divided into primitive sounds, *rest sounds*, immediate sounds of Nature, and in introduced sounds, *sounds appellants*. This is, in my opinion, the be-all and the end-all of musick...

C E G C
 ut mi sol ut

Innate sounds, primitive sounds, sounds natural to the voice and instruments.

B D F A
 si ré fa la

Appellant sounds, sounds introduced by art, and in a course of time, in order to contrast, or discord with the primitive sounds; these sounds fatigue the ear, and make it wish the return of the rest that is in the sounds of Nature.

This system appeared to me so very brilliant, that I took an orator's tone, and spoke *ex cathedra* to announce it, and so I began my oration.

The human mind, at times deep and capable of profound thought, does not stop at observing and collecting together the bare facts which Nature offers it from all sides; but it assembles, divides, distinguishes, compares,

pares, and deduces truths from them, by the assistance of which it reascends to the first principles of things. Then, contemplating nature afresh, it sees and admires her most secret operations.

At other times rather, more superficial, and confiding in two or three ill seen facts, the mind darts into the vast plains of the ideal world, where giving itself up to imagination, it explains nature, and dictates laws to the universe.

Nature works slowly on our globe, and mystery veils all its operations; the enquiry is painful, for truth runs away and hides herself.

Every thing is easy in the ideal world; there man knows every thing without ever learning any thing; the sacred fire which is plentifully diffused in that divine country, warms the poorest understanding so effectually, as to enable it to speak in an agreeable manner upon every topic; falsehood itself is so well dressed up by it, that mortals take her for truth.

It is on sounds especially that the mind loves to be busy in these aerial regions; it

I fixes

fixes the time, place, and method of the octave's being compleated with thirteen sounds; sounds are taught the road of melody; calculations are made in order to discover the sounds which must unite in harmony; and the sounds are marked which should accompany melody...

The doctrines sent down from the stars about this enchanting art, are so much respected here below, that genius often quits the lyre, in order to dictate (as if from the summit of the ideal world) rules and precepts.

Notwithstanding, however, all these precepts, still nothing is so obscure as the theory of musick. Hardly do we distinguish *Genius*, *Ability*, and *Art*, three divinities often confounded, and which seldom meet in the same person, but which are commendable though separate. The great works of genius are to be admired wherever they are met with; with the virtuoso too we may be delighted, as his skill fills the soul with pure and innocent pleasures; but still, the observing artist and *Master* is the only one from whom we can gain any instruction.

And

And yet nothing is more common than to ask advice of the *Genius* and *Virtuoso*, tho', alas! if these two great gods unfortunately could reason, the divine fire would soon be extinct in them, and then, to amuse us on the stage, we should have wise *de profundis*'s and *libera's*

The origin of the sounds of the octave, the birth of the two modes, and the formation and succession of harmonies, are the first objects of musical theories. In order to have some idea of them, let us observe and consult nature, &c. &c.

Here we go to the last part of *my new Lessons for the Harpsichord*, which is consecrated to system, and I shew my scholar these objects visibly explained by my system of *appeals*; I prove that the division of the scale into natural and appellant sounds, is a fruitful principle, as well for the invention of the scale, melody, and harmony, as for the explanation of the different objects of the musical art and science. At the same time, that my scholar may not think all these matters of too great importance, I remind him that we are in the chap-

ter of erudition, and that we knew musick before we got there, so that systems are quite indifferent things, and he may chuse which of them he pleases, or reject them all, and reason according to his own fancy upon the different musical talents he is possessed of.

The system of *appeals* is not the only acquisition I have made in the primitive world; I have also provided myself with a set of principles on the composition of melody; on the necessity of varying it, in order to accommodate it to different countries and languages; on that part of taste which depends on the peculiar accent and genius of the language in which you write; on the necessity of consulting the external motions of the several nations, for a proper accompaniment of melody, and for instrumental musick; and on a thousand other things, equally necessary for composing musick well and for judging it.

Here I stop, and suspend any farther lessons on this part of erudition for very good reasons.... Fanaticism is at this time very high in the musical world; and, were I to oppose

oppose any received opinions, I might become its victim . . . A *bravo* unadvisedly uttered at the opera happens to be heard by friends and neighbours who have a regard for a man, this is repeated and becomes *bravissimo*; the *bravissimo* makes us enthusiasts, and being once enthusiasts ourselves, we soon make a party like us; then we become leaders of the band; the heroes of the piece make us an humble bow; this we take to ourselves, and from that moment are either their protectors or their slaves; whilst, on the other hand, we not only despise the taste and musical talents of all those who carry their incense to another altar, but even quarrel with and abuse them for it* . . . As for myself, I blame no sort of publick worship, but not being able to serve all kinds of divinities, I keep my opinion to myself, that I may shok nobody; I shall already draw enemies enough upon my head, if my pam-

* Alas! I know from melancholy experience, that a moment's extasy felt by oneself, and not by others, can alter the head and heart of a man's best friends. Formerly fanaticism attacked only the foolish and ignorant; now-a-days it often triumphs over wit and genius.

phlet,

phlet, such as it is, happens to have any merit in it. At the proper time, however, I shall continue my history of musical genius, and, in a separate work, lay before the publick what are my principles and my method on composition, counterpoint, and the last part of erudition.

F I N I S.

MVSEVM
BRITAN
NICVM



